

**Archaeological Evaluation Report  
Land South of Hydehurst Lane, Northgate  
Crawley, West Sussex**

**NGR 527330 139050  
(TQ 2733 3905)**

**Crawley Borough Council Planning Ref. CR/2013/0620/FUL**

**ASE Project No: 6664  
Site Code: HYD 14**

**ASE Report No: 2014113  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-176334**



**By Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

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**By Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

**With contributions by Karine Le Hégarat, Luke Barber  
Elke Raemen and Trista Clifford**

**April 2014**

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**Abstract**

*Two archaeological evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated at the site on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to a cumulative length of 140m. The evaluated area was found to have been heavily plough-truncated and no evidence of in situ archaeological deposits or features was encountered.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL) was commissioned by CgMs consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the south of Hydehurst Lane, Northgate, Crawley, West Sussex (NGR527330 139050; Figure 1).

### **1.2 Topography and Geology**

1.2.1 The site, which lies at a height of c. 61m AOD comprises a large open, relatively level area, which had been utilised as an arable field in the recent past. The site is bounded to the north by Hydehurst Lane, to the south and east by industrial units and to the west by a public footpath.

1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock is Weald Clay, with deposits of Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand to the south. There is no recorded superficial geology (BGS 2014).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 Planning consent has been granted by Crawley Borough Council for the development of the site for a production building, ancillary offices and with associated access and parking spaces (planning reference: CR/2013/0620/FUL).

1.3.2 Following consultation between Crawley District Council and West Sussex County Council (Crawley Borough Council's advisers on archaeological issues) it was recommended that a programme of archaeological fieldwork should be made a condition of any planning consent granted for the site. This decision was based on information contained in the archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) supplied with the planning application (CgMs Consulting 2013).

1.3.3 Subsequently a condition (No. 14) was attached to the planning permission requiring that:

*'No development shall take place on the land until the applicant, or their agents has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority'*

1.3.5 Consequently CgMs Consulting prepared a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (CgMs 2014) for the archaeological evaluation of the site by mechanically excavated trial trenches, which was approved by West Sussex County Council in advance of the commencement of work. The document laid out the methods to be used at the site and the possibility that further archaeological work might be considered necessary to allow the discharge of the planning condition.

## 1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The aims and objectives of the archaeological investigation given in the WSI (*ibid.*) were:

*'The principal objective of the archaeological trenches will be to establish the existence/absence of archaeological deposits within the target area.*

*The local and regional research contexts are provided by the draft 'South-east Archaeological Research Framework. Any evidence retrieved during the works will be analysed in the light of the objectives contained in that Framework.'*

*In addition, the evaluation is specifically interested in ascertaining whether there was any variation in the line of the former parish/county boundary at the south of the site existed and how the boundary was marked.'*

## 1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 The current report provides the results of the archaeological evaluation of the site by the mechanical excavation of trial trenches carried out on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. The on-site work was undertaken by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist), Susan Chandler (Assistant Archaeologist) and Vasilis Tsamis (Archaeological Surveyor). The project was managed by Jonathan Sygrave (Project Manager) and by Dan Swift (Post-Excavation Manager).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 There have been a number of archaeological investigations in Crawley in recent years, but most have been further to the south in the 'known' extent of the medieval settlement (e.g. Saunders 1998; Cooke 2001; Stevens 2008).
- 2.2 A desk-based assessment (CgMs 2013) concluded that the archaeological potential of the current site was low, but that the southern boundary of the site lies on the former alignment of a parish, and at one time county boundary. Therefore it is considered possible that remains of the former alignments of these boundaries might exist within the current site.
- 2.3 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken immediately to the north of the current site, prior to the construction of Hydehurst Lane. Discoveries were limited to *'three ditches aligned on a north - south axis .... with two small sherds of possible Roman pottery recovered from one of the ditches. They most likely represent field boundary and/or drainage ditches but none relate to boundaries shown on post-medieval historic maps and are therefore likely to predate these.'* (ASE 2012, 24).
- 2.4 However, recent excavations have shown that the Weald does have considerable archaeological potential, even away from areas of known medieval activity. Such projects have provided an insight into the utilisation and occupation of an area which is typically assumed to be largely uninhabited in prehistory due to dense woodland and unworkable clay geology. One such site lies c.2km to the north of Hydehurst Lane. Excavations undertaken in advance of development at Gatwick Airport in 2001 uncovered remains of a Late Bronze Age settlement (Wells 2005).
- 2.5 In addition, approximately 7.5km to the north east of the site, large-scale archaeological investigations undertaken by ASE at Horley revealed extensive evidence of the multi-period occupation of the site including a Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age/Romano-British 1st to 3rd century AD settlement and 12th to 14th century medieval farming (Swift 2009).

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Excavation

- 3.1.1 Two trial trenches were mechanically excavated at the site to a cumulative length of 140m (Figure 2). The trench locations were supplied by CgMs Consulting and were aligned broadly from north to south in order to locate any evidence of boundary features running across the site (see 2.2 above).
- 3.1.2 The location of each of the trenches was scanned prior to excavation using a CAT scanner. The trenches were then excavated by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under the constant supervision of staff from Archaeology South-East.
- 3.1.3 The mechanical excavation was taken down to the top of 'natural' geological deposits. Care was taken not to damage archaeological deposits through excessive use of mechanical excavation. Revealed surfaces of the 'natural' geology were manually cleaned in an attempt to identify archaeological features. Spoil was scanned for the presence of artefacts, both visually and with a metal detector.

#### 3.2 Recording

- 3.2.1 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. Sections were drawn on drafting film at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate. A full photographic record of the work was also kept.

#### 3.3 Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held by Archaeology South-East at the offices in Portslade, and will be offered to Crawley Museum in due course. The archive consists of the following material:

Number of Contexts	6
Trench Record Forms	2
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	24 digital images
Bulk finds	1 small box

Table 1: Quantification of site archive



## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The site consisted of a large open field, which showed evidence of recent arable cultivation. The area was mostly level but with a notable raised area close to the Hydehurst Lane, which displayed modern debris on the surface, suggesting recent dumping of material in the area.

4.1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. Strong sunlight provided ideal conditions for identification and recording of archaeological features.

### 4.2 Trench 1

(Figure 2)

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
1/001	Deposit	Ploughsoil	220mm
1/002	Deposit	'Natural'	-
1/003	Deposit	Made Ground	260mm

Table 2: List of Recorded Contexts in Trench 1

4.2.1 Trench 1 was excavated to a length of 80m and to a depth of 360mm (65.48mAOD) at the northern end and to 200mm (65.16mAOD) at the southern end, at which the 'natural' was encountered and mechanical excavation ceased.

4.2.2 The overburden in the majority of the trench consisted of a single deposit of mid-greyish brown silty clay ploughsoil, context [1/001], which directly overlies the yellowish orange/orangey yellow sandy clay 'natural', context [1/002]. The surface of the 'natural' contained a number of thin, linear plough scars suggesting deep ploughing of the area, and explaining the absence of any subsoil layer.

4.2.3 In the northern c.8m of the trench a dump of bluish-grey silty clay, context [1/003] lay between the ploughsoil and the 'natural'. It contained debris including plastic and glass and corresponded to a gentle rise in the level of the ground close to the alignment of Hydehurst Lane. This clearly represents a dump of recent material, partially scattered by ploughing.

4.2.4 No archaeological deposits or features were encountered, although a small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the ploughsoil.

### 4.3 Trench 2

(Figure 2)

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
2/001	Deposit	Ploughsoil	320mm
2/002	Deposit	'Natural'	-
2/003	Deposit	Made Ground	200mm

Table 3: List of Recorded Contexts in Trench 2

- 4.3.1 Trench 2 was excavated to a length of 60m and to a depth of 400mm (66.52mAOD) at the northern end and to 320mm (65.68mAOD) at the southern end, at which the 'natural' was encountered and mechanical excavation ceased.
- 4.3.2 The layers of overburden were similar to those encountered in Trench 1, including the appearance of 'made ground' in the northernmost c.8m of the trench. The 'natural' was also similar to that seen in Trench 1, although bands of dark, laminar sandstone were visible at the surface of the 'natural' in a number of locations in the trench. These were investigated and proved to be entirely geological in origin.
- 4.3.3 No archaeological deposits or features were encountered, although a small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the ploughsoil.

## 5.0 THE FINDS

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation. Finds were all washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and bagged by material and context. Finds were all packed and stored according to IFA guidelines. None of the finds require further conservation. An overview is shown in Table 1 below.

Context	Pottery	wt(g)	Flint	wt (g)	Stone	wt (g)	Slag	wt (g)	Glass	wt (g)
1/001	2	32	1	12			2	50	1	10
2/001	1	6			1	10	1	8	2	8
Total	3	38	1	12	1	10	3	58	3	18

Table 4: Quantification of Finds

### 5.2 The Flintwork by Karine Le Hégarat

5.2.1 A single piece of struck flint weighing 12g was recovered from the ploughsoil – context (1/001). The piece consists of a modified blade. As it is regularly found with surface material, the artefact exhibits moderate post-depositional edge damage. The distal end is also absent. The fragmented blade displays blade scars and parallel ridges on the dorsal face, and it is clearly a product of blade-based industry. It strongly suggests a Mesolithic – early Neolithic date. In addition, the artefact displays two proximal notches. These notches are located on opposite lateral edges, and they may have been created to facilitate hafting.

### 5.3 The Pottery by Luke Barber

5.3.1 The evaluation recovered just three sherds of pottery from the ploughsoil. Context [1/001] contained a 25g bodysherd from an 18<sup>th</sup>- to mid 19<sup>th</sup>- century glazed red earthenware vessel and part of a late 19<sup>th</sup>- to early 20<sup>th</sup>- century shouldered preserve jar in Bristol glazed English stoneware. Both sherds show some signs of abrasion and have clearly been subjected to reworking. Context [2/001] produced a single 4g sherd from an English porcelain vessel of 19<sup>th</sup>- to early 20<sup>th</sup>- century date. This sherd is notably worn.

5.3.2 The assemblage has no potential for further analysis and is recommended for discard.

### 5.4 The Glass by Elke Raemen

5.4.1 A green glass wine bottle base fragment was found in [1/001]. Topsoil [2/001] contained a clear glass body fragment from a rectangular bottle with rounded corners and an aqua fragment from a cylindrical bottle. The latter is probably from a mineral water or sauce bottle. Fragments all date to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**5.5 The Geological Material** by Trista Clifford

- 5.5.1 A single piece of roofing slate weighing 10g was recovered from topsoil [2/001]. It is of West Country or Welsh origin. A post medieval date is probable. The slate is recommended for discard.

**5.6 The Metallurgical Remains** by Trista Clifford

- 5.6.1 Three pieces of blast furnace slag weighing a total of 58g were recovered from topsoil in Trenches 1 and 2. This type of slag is produced during the production of cast iron and has been recovered in quantity from the Crawley area. It is recommended for discard.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation of the site by mechanically excavated trial trenches showed that there had apparently been extensive truncation of the site by ploughing. No archaeological features were recorded and no particular concentrations of artefacts were recovered from the ploughsoil. There was no evidence of any features demarking the parish/county boundary.
- 6.2 The presence of prehistoric flintwork in the ploughsoil adds to the corpus of background scatters of material from a number of sites in the Crawley area (e.g. the Asda site Stevens 2008). The recovery of post-medieval material at the current site is in keeping with the deposition of debris on open land. The identification of blast furnace slag is not indicative of the location of a blast furnace in the vicinity, given the acknowledged mobility of this material (Cleere and Crossley 1995. 275).
- 6.3 It can be concluded that, based on currently available evidence, the current site has little to offer in terms of *in situ* archaeological deposits or features.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**HER Summary**

Site Code	HYD 14					
Identification Name and Address	Land South of Hydehurst Lane, Northgate					
County, District &/or Borough	Crawley Borough, West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	527330 139050					
Geology	Weald Clay					
ASE Project Number	6664					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓					
Type of Site	Green Field ✓					
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 01.04.2014					
Sponsor/Client	CgMs Consulting					
Project Manager	Jonathan Sygrave/Jim Stevenson					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary		Meso. ✓	Neo. ✓			
			PM ✓			
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>Two archaeological evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated at the site on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to a cumulative length of 140m. The evaluated area was found to have been heavily plough-truncated and no evidence of in situ archaeological deposits or features was encountered.</i></p>						

## OASIS Form

### OASIS ID: archaeol6-176334

#### Project details

Project name	Land South of Hydehurst Lane, Northgate, Crawley, West Sussex
Short description of the project	Two archaeological evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated at the site on 1st April 2014 to a cumulative length of 140m. The evaluated area was found to have been heavily plough-truncated and no evidence of in situ archaeological deposits or features was encountered. A small assemblage of artefacts including prehistoric flintwork and post-medieval blast furnace slag was recovered from the ploughsoil.
Project dates	Start: 01-04-2014 End: 01-04-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	6664 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	HYD14 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	CR/2013/0620/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Targeted Trenches""
Development type	Rural commercial
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX CRAWLEY CRAWLEY Land South of Hydehurst Lane, Northgate



Postcode	RH10 9AS
Study area	2.00 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 27330 39050 51.136008 -0.179830226871 51 08 09 N 000 10 47 W Point

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**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting

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**Project archives**

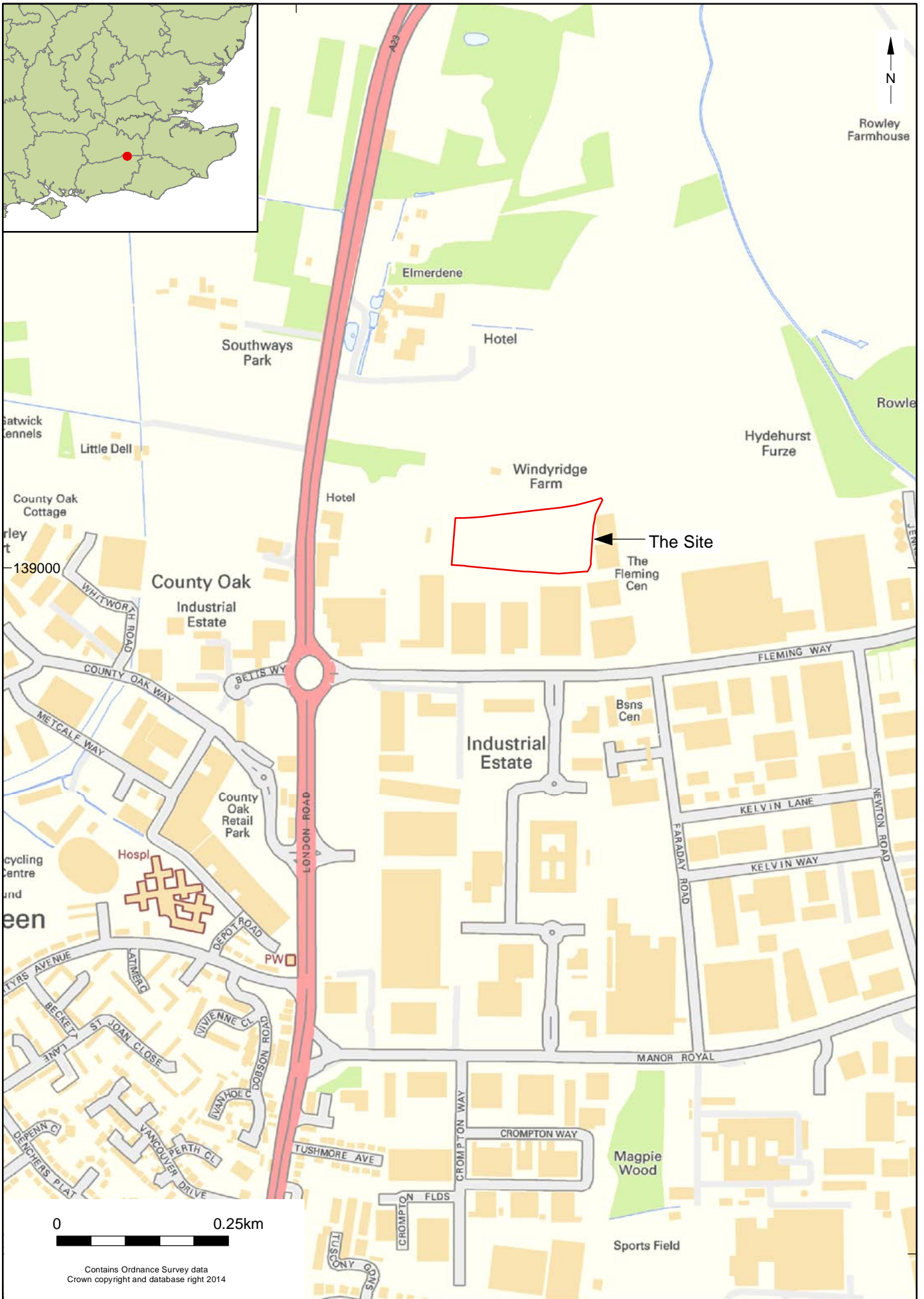
Physical Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Physical Contents	"Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Notebook - Excavation"," Research"," General Notes","Report","Survey","Unpublished Text"

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**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Title	An Archaeological Evaluation Report - Land South of Hydehurst Lane, Northgate, Crawley, West Sussex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Stevens, S.
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Entered on	8 April 2014



© Archaeology South-East		Hydehurst Lane, Northgate, Crawley	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 6664	April 2014	Site location	
Report Ref: 2014113	Drawn by: RHC		



Fig. 2.1 Trench 1 looking south

Fig. 2.2 Trench 2 looking south-west



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© Archaeology South-East		Hydehurst Lane, Northgate, Crawley	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6664	April 2014	Trench location and photographs	
Report Ref: 2014113	Drawn by: RHC		





Southern end of Trench 1



Southern end of Trench 2

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